



MOTOROLA

FAX TRANSMITTAL SHEET

**RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER**

MAY 01 2006

Motorola, Inc.
Law Department - MD 1610
8000 W. Sunrise Blvd.
Plantation, FL 33322
Telephone: (954) 723-6449
Fax: (954) 723-3871

18 Number of Pages (including this page)

Date: May 1, 2006
To Examiner: Jeffrey J. Piziali
Location: United States Patent and Trademark Office
Fax No.: Centralized Fax Number: 1 (571) 273-8300
From: Scott M. Garrett - Registration No. 39,988
Attorney's Docket No. CM02045K Confirmation No. 6374

NOTICE: This facsimile transmission may contain information that is confidential, privileged, or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. It is intended only for the person to whom it is addressed. Unauthorized use, disclosure, copying or distribution may expose you to legal liability. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately notify us by telephone (collect) to arrange for return of the documents received and any copies made. Thank you.

MESSAGE:

In connection with the above-identified Patent Application, please find attached herewith the following documents:

- Transmittal Form;
- A 16 page Brief in support of appeal.

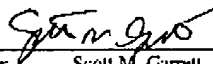
PLEASE DELIVER THESE PAPERS TO:

EXAMINER:	Jeffrey J. Piziali
GROUP ART UNIT:	2629
SERIAL NO.:	10/055,474
FILED:	January 23, 2002
INVENTOR:	JAMES L. TRACY

CERTIFICATE OF FAX TRANSMITTAL

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted by facsimile to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, at (571) 273-8300 on the date listed below:

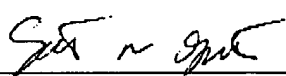
Date: May 1, 2006

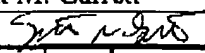
Signature: 
Printed Name: Scott M. Garrett

MAY 01 2006

TRANSMITTAL FORM (to be used for all correspondence after initial filing)	Application Number	10/055,474
	Filing Date	January 23, 2002
	First Named Inventor	James L. Tracy
	Group Art Unit	2629
	Examiner Name	Jeffrey J. Piziali

ENCLOSURES		(check all that apply)
<input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Amendment/Reply <input type="checkbox"/> After Final <input type="checkbox"/> Affidavits/Declaration(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request <input type="checkbox"/> Express Abandonment Request <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Copy of Priority Documents <input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts/ Incomplete Application <input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts Under 37 CFR 1.52 or 1.53	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing-Related papers <input type="checkbox"/> Petition <input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Convert to a Provisional Application <input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation, Change of Correspondence Address <input type="checkbox"/> Terminal Disclaimer <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Refund <input type="checkbox"/> CD, Number of CDs _____	<input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to Group <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Board <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Group (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief) <input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary Information <input type="checkbox"/> Status Letter with appropriate copies <input type="checkbox"/> Other Enclosure(s) (please identify below)
Remarks Corrected brief in response to notice of non-compliant brief.		

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT			
Firm or Individual	Scott M. Garrett	Registration No.	39,988
Signature			
Date	May 1, 2006		

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING			
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date listed below:			
Typed or printed name	Scott M. Garrett		
Signature		Date	May 1, 2006
Total Number of Pages in this Submission	17	Attorney Docket Number	CM02045K

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

MAY 01 2006

Before the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences

Ex Parte: James L. Tracy
Application Number: 10/055,474
Filing Date: January 23, 2002
Title: ADAPTABLE KEYPAD AND
BUTTON MECHANISM THERFOR

Group: 2629
Examiner: JEFFREY J. PIZIALI

BRIEF ON BEHALF OF APPELLANTS UNDER 37 CFR 41.37

Scott M. Garrett
Attorney of Record

Motorola, Inc.
Intellectual Property Section
Law Department
8000 W. Sunrise Blvd
Plantation FL, 33322

Telephone: 954-723-6449
Facsimile: 954-723-3871
Mail Date: May 1, 2006

This appeal brief is filed following a notice of non-compliant brief mailed March 29,
2006.

CONTENTS

I. <u>REAL PARTY IN INTEREST</u>	3
II. <u>RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES</u>	3
III. <u>STATUS OF CLAIMS</u>	3
IV. <u>STATUS OF AMENDMENTS</u>	3
V. <u>SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER</u>	3
VI. <u>GROUND OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL</u>	5
VII. <u>ARGUMENT</u>	5
VIII. <u>CLAIMS APPENDIX</u>	11
IX. <u>EVIDENCE APPENDIX</u>	16
X. <u>RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX</u>	16

I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The name of the real party in interest for purposes of this appeal is Motorola, Inc., a Delaware corporation.

II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no other appeals of interferences known to the Applicant, the Applicant's legal representative, or assignee which would directly affect or be directly affected by or having a bearing on the Board's decision in this pending appeal.

III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-23 remain in the application. Claims 1-23 are being appealed. Claims 1-23 stand or fall together. In the final Office Action dated August 22, 2005, the Examiner finally rejected Claims 1-23. Claims 8-22 were rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph and 35 USC 112 second paragraph; claims 1-4, 8-12, and 17-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Di Santo et al (US 4,870,677); and claims 5-7, 13-16, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Di Santo in view of Dreher (US 4,551,717).

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendment was filed subsequent to the date of the Final Rejection of August 22, 2005.

V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

In one embodiment a button mechanism 300 is claimed including a switch means 304 that operates or completes a button circuit 303 when the button mechanism 300 is actuated. Disposed in conjunction with the button mechanism 300 is a display means 306, 308, 310, 316

which includes a driver layer 306 which has a conductor element 114 in the form of a symbol that is to be displayed on the button mechanism. An electrically active ink layer 308 is disposed on the driver layer and covered by a transparent conductor layer 310. This and other embodiments are described in FIGs. 1 and 3, and at page 3, lines 27-31; page 4, lines 7-26; and page 7, lines 10-30.

In another embodiment an adaptable keypad 100 is claimed which includes a plurality of keys, each key including a switch 104 for operating a button circuit, and a flexible display including a driver layer 108 having conductor elements in the form of symbols to be displayed located in correspondence with each of the plurality of keys, and an electrically active ink layer 110 disposed between the driver layer and a transparent conductor layer 112. This and other embodiments are shown and described in FIGs. 1-3, and at page 3, lines 23-31; page 4, lines 7-26; page 5, line 30 to page 6, line 4; page 6 lines 22-34; and page 7, lines 10-30.

In another embodiment of the invention a portable electronic device having an adaptable keypad 100 is claimed. The device is operable in a plurality of modes and includes a keypad having a plurality of keys, each including a switch means 104 and a flexible display means. The flexible display means includes a driver layer 108, a transparent conductor layer 112, and an electrically active ink layer 110 disposed between the transparent conductor layer and driver layer. This and other embodiments are described in FIGs. 1-3, and at page 3, lines 23-31; page 4, lines 7-26; page 5, line 30 to page 6, line 4; and page 6 line 22 to page 7, line 30.

In another embodiment of the invention a button mechanism is claimed including a switch means 304 that operates or completes a button circuit 303 when the button mechanism is actuated. Disposed in conjunction with the button mechanism is a flexible display means 306, 308, 310 which includes a driver layer 308 which has a conductor element 202, 204, 206 in the form of a symbol that is to be displayed on the button mechanism. An electrically active ink

layer 308 is disposed on the driver layer and covered by a transparent conductor layer 310. This and other embodiments are described in FIGs. 1 and 3, and at page 3, lines 27-31; page 4, lines 7-26; and page 7, lines 10-30.

VI. GROUND OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

Claims 8, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph;

claims 9-15, and 18-22 are rejected as being dependent on claims rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph;

claims 8, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraphs;

claims 9-15, and 18-22 are rejected as being dependent on claims rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph;

claims 1-4, 8-12, and 17-20 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over Di Santo et al (US 4,870,677); and

claims 5-7, 13-16, and 21-23 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Di Santo in view of Dreher (US 4,551,717).

VII. ARGUMENT

With regard to claims independent 8, 16, and 17, dependent claims 9-15 and 18-22, and the rejection under 35 USC 112 first paragraph:

Independent claims 8, 16, and 17 were rejected for failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant amended claims 8 and 16 to add the limitation that the display means is flexible. Claim 17 was added during prosecution and contains the same limitation. Examiner contends that the specification does not support this limitation and that the specification only describes the driver layer as being flexible. The driver layer is an integral part of the display means.

On page 4, lines 13-16 recite: “[t]he assembly further includes a laminate for providing a *display means* comprised of a *driver layer* 108, an *electrically active ink layer* 110, and a *transparent conductor layer* 112.”

Lines 16-20 continue, “The driver layer 108 is itself a laminate comprised of a *flexible* insulator layer made of, for example, Mylar or polyamide. On the *flexible* insulator layer there is disposed conductor elements 114, such as copper or conductive ink, for example.”

These passages establish that the display means is a display laminate including flexible elements. Mylar and polyamide are notoriously well known in the art of flexible circuit boards.

On page 7, lines 30-31 recite, “[t]his *display laminate* is *flexible*, allowing the popple dome to be depressed.”

Thus, it is established that the display laminate is flexible, and provides that it is flexible enough to allow operation of a mechanical popple dome. As can be seen in FIG. 3, and as described at page 7, lines 25-28, the display means, comprised of a driver layer 306, electrically active ink layer 308, and driver layer 310, resides in correspondence with the popple dome 304. The popple dome must be depressed to contact a switch circuit 303, as described on the same page 7 at lines 20-25.

With regard to the conductor traces, which are described as part of the flexible display means, and therefore may not render the display means inflexible, it is well known to those skilled in the art of flexible circuit boards that conductor layers including conductor traces are flexible.

Accordingly, Applicant believes the instant specification fully describes the claimed limitation that the display means is flexible.

With regard to claims independent 8, 16, and 17, dependent claims 9-15 and 18-22, and the rejection under 35 USC 112 second paragraph:

Independent claims 8, 16, and 17 were also rejected for being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner contended that the term “flexible” is not defined by the claim, and that the specification does not provide the requisite degree of flexibility necessary to practice the invention.

However, as pointed out with respect to the display means, the display means must be flexible *enough* to allow operation of a popple dome located in correspondence with the flexible display means, as recited at page 7, lines 20-25. Applicant had previously argued that the glass display of a cited reference was not flexible. Examiner contends that glass has some flexibility.

However, glass will not be sufficiently flexible to allow operation of a popple dome, as shown in FIG. 3. One of ordinary skill in the art would not conceive of using glass in such an application, but would realize the degree of flexibility necessary would be found in materials such as mylar and polyamide which are commonly used in the fabrication of flexible circuit boards. Even if one were unaware as to the degree of flexibility needed, Applicant contends, given the materials described by Applicant, one would not be required to perform undue experimentation to design a display means flexible enough to operate the popple dome.

Accordingly, Applicant believes the instant specification fully enables the claimed limitation that the display means is flexible.

With regard to claims 1-4, 8-12, and 17-20:

Claims 1-4, 8-12, and 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Di Santo (U.S. Patent No.4,870,677).

MPEP § 2131 provides:

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described in a single prior art reference.” *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F. 2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as contained in the ... claim.” *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). The elements must be arranged as required by the claim

Di Santo teaches a display 11 which may be used to display images of buttons as shown in FIGs. 2 and 3. The display uses, for example, a pressure sensitive overlay 12 to detect the location of pressure applied to the display system. The display uses a series of X and Y gridlines (col. 2, line 67 to col. 3, line 2). More detail is not provided in the description section of Di Santo, but the description does appear to refer to a the background section where it says “as indicated above” (col. 2, line 68). In the background section another patent by Di Santo (US 4,655,897), also having a X-Y arrangement, is recited. It appears this is the type of display used in the description of the invention. The description of the ‘897 patent display recites:

“The patent discloses an electrophoretic display apparatus which includes a planar transparent member having disposed on a surface a plurality of vertical conductive lines to form *a grid of lines in the Y direction*. On top of the grid of vertical lines there is disposed *a plurality of horizontal lines which are positioned above the vertical lines* and insulated therefrom by a thin insulating layer at each of the intersection points. Spaced above the horizontal and vertical line pattern is *a conductive plate*. The space between the conductive plate and the X and Y line patterns is filled in with

an electrophoretic dispersion containing chargeable pigment particles. When a voltage is impressed between the X and Y lines pigment particles, which are located in wells or depressions between the X and Y pattern, are caused to migrate towards the conductive plate and are deposited upon the conductive plate in accordance with the bias applied to the X and Y line conductors.”

Thus, the display used in Di Santo uses three conductor layers to generate visually perceivable patterns in the electrophoretic material: an X grid of lines, a Y grid of lines, and a conductive plate. No differing description is offered elsewhere in Di Santo, and this summary has not been controverted in prosecution. To generate a pattern at a desired location, a “voltage is impressed between the X and Y pattern” causing particles to migrate towards the conductive plate and are deposited on the conductive plate.”

Applicant’s claimed invention, as recited in all independent claims 1, 8, 16, and 17, uses only two conductor layers: a driver layer and a transparent conductor layer. The driver layer contains conductor elements in the shape of a symbol to be displayed. Examiner has contended that Di Santos X-Y grid lines are in the shape of a symbol to be displayed because they can be used to display a period. However, this is incorrect comparison to Applicant’s claimed limitation because to display a period, an X grid line and a Y grid line must be energized, and the shape is displayed only at their intersection. This requires two conductor layers, and the shape that is displayed is not in the shape of the conductors (grid lines), but is in the shape of their intersection. Therefore, Di Santo does not show Applicant’s claimed limitation of “a driver layer having a conductor element configured in the form of a symbol to be displayed,” as recited in claim 1 and similarly in claims 8, 16, and 17.

Claim 2 recites the limitation of first and second sets of conductors of the conductor element recited in claim 1, thus these sets of conductors are on the driver layer, as shown in FIG. 2 and described on page 5, line 30 to page 6, line 14. These sets of conductors for the symbol to be displayed. This allows two different symbols to be displayed at the location of the conductor sets. The Rejection contends this is equivalent to Di Santo’s X-Y gridlines. However, as argued above, Di Santo’s structure requires three conductor layers, Applicant’s claimed structure is still only two layers. Furthermore, these conductor sets are still in the form of a symbol to be displayed, and not mere X-Y grid lines.

Claims 3 and 4 add to claim 2, and claim a third set of conductors that includes conductor elements common to both the first and second sets of conductor in claim 2. Claim 4 adds the

limitation that the symbols are differently oriented. Again, with two conductor layers, not three as in Di Santo.

With regard to claim 8-11, 16, and 1-20, these claims contain similar limitations as in claims 1-4, but add that the display means is flexible. The flexibility of the display means has been discussed herein, supra, with respect to the rejections under 35 USC 112. The Rejection contends that the uncontroverted glass element of Di Santo is flexible, equivalent to Applicant's flexible display. However, the mere fact that glass may have *some* flexibility, given a sufficiently thin and sizeable area, does not make it equivalent to Applicant's flexible display, which must be flexible enough to operate a mechanical switch element such as a popple dome disposed in correspondence with the display, as claimed. Applicant contends that glass is not an equivalently flexible material, nor would one consider glass, given the dimensions recited in Di Santo (4 inches by 4 inches, col. 2, lines 63-65), to be "flexible" within an ordinary meaning of the word. Thus, as with claims 1-4, Applicant believes claims 8-11, 16, and 17-20 are distinguished from Di Santo, and are further distinguished by the added limitation of a flexible display.

With regard to claim 12, the limitation of first and second sets of symbols is added. Again, these sets occur on the driver layer 108, and shown in FIG. 1. They comprise a single conductor layer, unlike Di Santo which used an X grid layer and a Y grid layer.

With regard to claims 5-7, 13-16, and 21-23:

Claims 5-7, 13-16, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Di Santo in view of Dreher (US 4,551,717).

All of the claims rejected in the section are dependent on independent claims Applicant regards as allowable in view of the arguments made with regard to the rejection under 35 USC 102(b). Thus Applicant believes Di Santo does not apply to these claims either.

However, with regard to claim 5, which recites that the switch means is a popple switch, Examiner refers to Dreher, FIG. 2, elements 11 and 12. Applicant points out that these elements are a key cap and a lens, as stated by Dreher at col. 2, lines 26-29. Dreher does not show a popple switch. Dreher does, however, recite that "any type of switch operable by the depression of a key can be used." However, Di Santo teaches away from using a switch means that requires depression to the degree of the key in Dreher or Applicant's popple switch because, as pointed out hereinabove, Di Santo's display uses glass substrate, and would not permit depression to actuate a sprung switch mechanism. Were one to use a sprung switch with the display of Di

Santo, the display would break under the force of depression. Therefore Applicant believes one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine Di Santo and Dreher.

Regarding claim 6, Examiner compared the lens of Dreher to Applicant's claimed transparent actuating member. However, while Applicant's transparent actuating member allows one to see what is displayed by the display means, it is more than a mere lens. It is the sole structure for actuating the switch. The key cap 11 of Dreher supports the lens 12, and it is the key cap that imparts force to the switch means. Dreher does not teach that the key cap is transparent.

Regarding claim 7, Examiner compared the lens 12 of Dreher to the convex outer surface of Applicant's transparent actuating member. However, claim 7 depends from claim 6, and as pointed out with regard to claim 6, the lens is not the actuating member.

With regard to claims 13-15, and claims 21-23, these claims correspond to claims 5-7, respectively. The distinctions drawn hereinabove apply to these claims as well.

For the reason set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that the Rejection of claims 1-23 has been obviated, and request that the Board withdraw the rejection.

Regarding claims 16 and amendments made during prosecution, Applicant made a good faith effort to amend claim 16 on June 7, 2005. As noted in the Notice of non-compliant brief, however, Applicant used single brackets rather than double bracket to delete matter. The Notice suggested incorporating the single brackets, however, the single brackets were not underlined, and therefore could not have been added, as is necessary to add subject matter under the same rules of amendment practice requiring double brackets to delete subject matter. Therefore Applicant has included the text of claim 16 including the text between single brackets, but not the brackets themselves. Should claim 16 be otherwise found allowable, Applicant would prefer deleting the text in single brackets in the June 7, 2005 amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

James L. Tracy

by: 

Scott M. Garrett

Attorney for Applicant

Registration No. 39,988

Phone: 954-723-6449

Fax: 954-723-3871

VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. A button mechanism, comprising:
a switch means for operating a button circuit in response to actuation of the button mechanism;
display means disposed in correspondence with the switch means and comprising:
a driver layer having a conductor element configured in the form of a symbol to be displayed on the button mechanism, and a conductive trace connected to the conductor element for providing voltage to the conductor element;
a transparent conductor layer; and
an electrically active ink layer disposed between the transparent conductor layer and the driver layer.
2. A button mechanism as defined in claim 1, wherein the conductor element comprises:
a first set of conductor elements corresponding to a first symbol, and connected to a first set of conductive traces; and
a second set of conductor elements corresponding to a second symbol and connected to a second set of conductive traces;
wherein the first and second symbols are coincidentally located.
3. A button mechanism as defined in claim 2, further comprising a third set of conductor elements which form segments common to both the first and second symbols, and are connected to a third set of conductive traces.
4. A button mechanism as defined in claim 2, wherein the first and second symbols are not commonly oriented.
5. A button mechanism as defined in claim 1, wherein the switch means comprises a popple switch.
6. A button mechanism as defined by claim 5, further comprising a transparent actuating member disposed in correspondence with the popple switch, such that the display means is between the popple switch and the transparent actuating member.

7. A button mechanism as defined in claim 6, wherein the transparent actuating member has a convex outer surface.

8. An adaptable keypad, comprising:
a plurality of keys, each of the plurality of keys comprising:
a switch means for operating a button circuit in response to actuation of the button mechanism;
a flexible display means disposed in correspondence with the switch means and comprising:
a driver layer having a conductor element in the form of a symbol to be displayed by the button mechanism, and a conductive trace connected to the conductor element for providing voltage to the conductor element;
a transparent conductor layer; and
an electrically active ink layer disposed between the transparent conductor layer and the driver layer.

9. An adaptable keypad as defined in claim 8, wherein the conductor element of each key comprises:
a first set of conductor elements corresponding to a first symbol, and connected to a first set of conductive traces; and
a second set of conductor elements corresponding to a second symbol and connected to a second set of conductive traces;
wherein the first and second symbols are coincidentally located.

10. An adaptable keypad as defined in claim 9, each key further comprising a third set of conductor elements which form segments common to both the first and second symbols, and are connected to a third set of conductive traces.

11. An adaptable keypad as defined in claim 9, wherein the first and second symbols are not commonly oriented.

12. An adaptable keypad as defined in claim 9, wherein the first set of conductor elements for each of the plurality of keys forms a first symbol set, the second set of conductor elements for each of the plurality of keys forms a second symbol set, the first and second symbol sets are exclusively energized depending on a mode of operating the keypad, wherein the keypad is usable in at least two modes, each mode requiring using a different orientation.

13. An adaptable keypad as defined in claim 8, wherein each of the switch means comprises a popple switch.

14. An adaptable keypad as defined by claim 13, further comprising a plurality of transparent actuating members, each of the transparent actuating members disposed in correspondence with each of the popple switches, such that the display means is between the popple switches and the transparent actuating members, and wherein each of the plurality of transparent actuating members is held in place by a housing.

15. An adaptable keypad as defined in claim 13, wherein each of the transparent actuating members has a convex outer surface.

16. A portable electronic device having an adaptable keypad, the portable electronic device operable in a plurality of modes, the portable electronic device comprising:

a keypad having a plurality of keys, each of the plurality of keys comprising:

a switch means for operating a button circuit corresponding to the switch means in response to actuation of the button mechanism being depressed;

a flexible display means disposed in correspondence with the switch means and comprising:

a driver layer having a first set of conductor elements corresponding to a first symbol and connected to a first set of conductive traces, and a second set of conductor elements corresponding to a second symbol and connected to a second set of conductive traces, and wherein the first and second symbols are coincidentally located in correspondence with one of the plurality of keys;

a transparent conductor layer; and

an electrically active ink layer disposed between the transparent conductor layer and the driver layer.; and

a plurality of transparent actuating members, each of the transparent actuating members disposed in correspondence with one of the plurality of keys, and wherein each of the plurality of transparent actuating members is held in place by a housing of the portable electronic device.

17. A button mechanism for an electronic device, comprising:

a switch means for operating a button circuit in response to actuation of the button mechanism;

a flexible display means disposed in correspondence with the switch means and comprising:

a driver layer having a conductor element configured in the form of a symbol to be displayed at the button mechanism, and a conductive trace connected to the conductor element for providing voltage to the conductor element;

a transparent conductor layer; and

an electrically active ink layer disposed between the transparent conductor layer and the driver layer;

wherein the flexible display means allows depression of the switch means to complete the button circuit.

18. A button mechanism as defined in claim 17, wherein the conductor element comprises:

a first set of conductor elements corresponding to a first symbol, and connected to a first set of conductive traces; and

a second set of conductor elements corresponding to a second symbol and connected to a second set of conductive traces;

wherein the first and second symbols are coincidentally located, and wherein the first and second set of conductor elements and first and second set of conductive traces are all located on a single layer.

19. A button mechanism as defined in claim 18, further comprising a third set of conductor elements which form segments common to both the first and second symbols, and are connected to a third set of conductive traces.

20. A button mechanism as defined in claim 18, wherein the first and second symbols are not commonly oriented.

21. A button mechanism as defined in claim 17, wherein the switch means comprises a popple switch.

22. A button mechanism as defined by claim 21, further comprising a transparent actuating member disposed in correspondence with the popple switch, such that the display means is between the popple switch and the transparent actuating member.

23. A button mechanism as defined in claim 6, wherein the transparent actuating member has a convex outer surface.

IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX

No evidence has been submitted pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.130, 1.131, or 1.132, entered by the examiner and relied upon by the appellant in the appeal, or relied upon by the examiner as to grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal.

X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

No decisions have been rendered by a court of the Board in any proceeding identified pursuant to paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of 37 C.F.R. § 41.37.